



Howitzer
A-3



Garden
B-1



Pro Bowl
C-1



Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantariotis

Sergeant Maj. Stephen Bell, battalion sergeant major, 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, received a Bronze Star Feb. 6 here for leading and preparing his Marines for their short-notice deployment to Iraq.

K-Bay sergeant major awarded Bronze Star

Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantariotis

Combat Correspondent

A battalion sergeant major here received a Bronze Star Feb. 6 for preparing and leading his Marines during a short-notice deployment order.

Sergeant Maj. Stephen Bell, battalion sergeant major, 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, balanced mission accomplishment and his Marines' morale while they performed outside their military occupational specialties.

"These Marines performed what they call a 'non-standard mission,'" Bell explained. "No one came close to a [howitzer]. The deployment was so successful because I was fortunate

enough to lead an outstanding unit."

Along with an atypical role for artillerymen during the deployment, performing convoy security and military police functions, Bell said they had Marines strung throughout al Anbar province.

"The type of leadership I employ is what I call, 'leadership by wandering about,'" Bell said. "That means from training to deployment, going to different locations and making sure everything was on track, seeing how the Marines were doing. I'd ask a lot of the sergeants and corporals if there was anything to pass. Most of them will have important things to say,

See BRONZE, A-6



Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantariotis

Petty Officer 2nd Class Johnathan Vandervis, aerospace medical corpsman, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 363, is a two-time recipient of the Aviation Medical Technician of the Year award.

Sailor thrives on excellence, helping

Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantariotis

Combat Correspondent

Imagine waking every day enthusiastic and eager to help people while endlessly seeking improvement in every aspect of your life.

That's how Petty Officer 2nd Class Johnathan Vandervis, aerospace medical technician corpsman, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 363, Marine Aircraft Group 24, begins every day.

"Honestly, I just feel really blessed," said Vandervis, who was recently awarded Aviation Medical Technician of the Year for the second time. "I work with great people, and I let their work inspire me."

Vandervis credits his upbringing for his work ethic and drive.

See SAILOR, A-7

Welcome home



Lance Cpl. Alesha R. Guard

Marines from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, are welcomed home during the advanced party homecoming ceremony Feb. 7 with a roar of cheering and handshakes. Look for the homecoming story and photos in the Feb. 29 issue of *Hawaii Marine*.

MCBH avoids death rate increase

Christine Cabalo

Photojournalist

More Marines are dying during their off-duty time than in combat, according to last week's report from the Naval Safety Center.

More than 80 percent of Marine deaths from October 2007 to present occurred from private motor vehicle or off-duty incidents. Hawaii's off-duty death rates steer clear of the trend: no current fatalities this year.

"Our safety programs helped reduce the number of deaths from motorcycle and motor vehicle incidents," said Bill Sode, deputy director, Base Safety Center. "Recently our motorcycle safety program won an award as one of the best military installation programs among the Marine Corps."

Sode said the center's regular safety briefings and experimental programs strive to reduce fatal risks to Marines. The deputy director said the center's aim is to find more interactive ways to inform service members. He said devices, including a car simulating drunk driving, give others a clear idea about fatal consequences. Currently the center is investigating how well preventative tools work.



Courtesy photo

A volunteer drives a simulated impaired driving experience car during a Base Safety Center demonstration. The car mimics how drivers lose their dexterity and speedy response time when intoxicated. The SIDE car is one of several tools the center uses to curb motor fatalities in Hawaii.

"We're testing out a one-tube people can blow into to determine if they've passed the legal limit," he said. "If they have, the tube turns blue. Randomly picked units are testing a few hundred tubes. We're still doing the research, but we're hoping using the tubes as a meter will significantly reduce drunk driving risks."

In Hawaii, service members also face fatal dangers at the beach during recreation time. Dino Leonard, assistant manager, Base Water Safety, said swimming or snorkeling alone

is hazardous. Areas here, such as North Beach, will close because there's not much sand to buffer very high wave periods.

"We speak with the units, and we do safety briefs on request," he said. "We've improved our rates by giving education on prevention, and we average about seven ambulance assists each year."

The assistant manager said in the 1960s the base's beaches could expect a drowning roughly every two years. His office now uses more modern

methods for safety, and fatalities at the beach are greatly reduced. Tuesday marked the 10th anniversary of the last drowning death at any of the base's beaches.

"In the past our office was more reactive," he said. "Our approach now is definitely more preventative, and we use our safety contacts. We'll have lifeguards speak to beach patrons once they get on the beach, and we're focused more on the educational side of it.

See SAFETY, A-6

— NEWS BRIEFS —

Bone Marrow Drive Volunteers Needed

Marine Corps Base Hawaii needs volunteers to help register donors for the DoD Bone Marrow Center. A training session will be held 8 to 8:30 a.m. Feb 20 at the Base Chapel, Room 29.

The process to register a donor is easy - all that is required is a Q-tip swipe in the mouth and two pages of simple paperwork. No medical experience is necessary to register donors, and by helping to find potential donors, you are helping save lives.

Volunteers are needed March 14 and 15 for the actual drive. Additional dates will occur the week of March 11 to help units with their drives. To volunteer and assist in the Bone Marrow Drive, call Dan Dufrene at 254-7636.

Commissary Closure

The K-Bay Commissary is closing Feb. 25-26 for renovations and a store reset. The staff apologizes for any inconvenience and looks forward to reopening the store Feb. 27.

For more information call Jeff Dusich or Don Wong at 257-1463.

Telephone Request Delay

The G6 will not process Telephone Service Requests now through Feb. 21. Any requests they receive during this time period will be processed after the moratorium.

For more information, contact G6 Operations at 257-5000.

Crescent Drive Closure/Construction

A portion of Crescent Dr., from B386 to Mokapu Rd., will be closed for repaving Feb. 27-29. Please plan accordingly and vary your route if this affects you.

For more information, call Ens. Nathan Chenarak at 257-1159.

Tax Center

The Marine Corps Base Hawaii Tax Center is open. It is located in Building 279 on the second deck. The hours for the Tax Center are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesday.

For more information call 630-8296.

Hawaii Marine Accepts Letters

Hawaii Marine invites its readers to e-mail its editor at hmeditor@hawaiimarine.com with their comments and letters.

All submissions will be edited for clarity and length. Comments must be signed with a full name and a telephone number.

Hawaii Marine also accepts news briefs containing relevant information pertaining to Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

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Fraud, Waste, Abuse & EEO	257-8852
Business Management Hotline	257-3188
Pothole & Streetlight Repair	257-2380
Base Information	449-7110
MCBH Duty Chaplain	257-7700
DEERS	257-2077

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The Most Excellent Way



Lt. Cmdr. David A. Stroud
Headquarters Battalion Chaplain

“And now I will show you the most excellent way.”

1 Corinthians 12:31b

This is my first assignment to a Marine Corps base after nine years serving as chaplain to different Navy commands around the country.

One thing I’ve noticed in my

few short weeks is that while the Navy and the Marine Corps are both a part of the same Department of the Navy, they are different. The language is different. Who is responsible for what is different. It’s taken some getting used to.

There have been many days where I’ve had to go ask others for the way to accomplish my task. At times I was not so concerned if it was the “most excellent way,” I just wanted to find someone who could help me get all the things done that are required when one checks into a new command. If someone had come to me and said, “Let me show you the most excellent way,” I would’ve been so grateful.

That is exactly what happened to the Christians in Corinth way back in the first Century AD. This quote is how the Apostle Paul begins a section of his first letter to the

Corinthians on love.

In this section Paul basically tells the Corinthians that it does not matter how talented they are or how devoted they are or how much resources they have, if they don’t have love they won’t be a blessing to the people around them. I think this is a message that we all can learn.

So often, we try to impress those around us with our wealth or our ability or our hard work, but we fail to love them as one of God’s children. This is especially true in our families. We get so caught up in the business of each day and we forget to stop and enjoy the child, the spouse or the friend that is sitting in the chair next to us. These are the people that we love most dearly, yet we are prone to forget to share that love with them.

I’m a Christian chaplain and in the Christian tradition we say that the greatest example of love

that has ever been given was when God gave himself for us. That is what we celebrate during the Christmas season. No matter what our faith tradition is, however, we can all follow this example and put aside our own wants in order to love the ones around us.

This letter of Paul’s goes on to say that love is patient and kind. It’s not rude, envious or boastful. It always protects, always trusts and always perseveres.

When one talks about true love, this is what the goal should be. We need to look out for others above ourselves. True love always looks outward.

Giving this type of love might be difficult when the football game you’ve been waiting to see is coming on the television but if you seek a strong marriage, good friendships or a strong relationship with your kids, it is the most excellent way.

‘It’s not my job’ doesn’t cut it



Ken Griffin
Managing Editor

As a former Marine, I can look back on my time on active duty and say with confidence that never at any point was it appropriate to say

“that’s not my job” to a superior. If the boss asks for something and you’re not capable, or the task should be done by someone else, you say “roger that” and delegate it to the person who can or should get it done. Mission accomplished.

After leaving the Corps, I made sure to take that lesson and many others with me. No supervisor, military or civilian, wants to hear that you can’t or won’t do something. What they do want to hear is that you’ll take care of it, whether you do it yourself or delegate the task to the appropriate party.

Marines are frequently assigned tasks that “weren’t in the job description.” As an infantryman, nobody told me

I’d be field-daying a condemned Navy barracks, digging through a dumpster for recyclables or watching another man urinate for a whiz quiz – just to name a few things. But, we learn very quickly that when something needs to get done, we get it done. If we don’t carry the weight, the next guy does.

In the civilian world it’s not much different, although admittedly the variance of responsibilities is not generally so extreme. For example, my boss here has never requested I field day his head ... and I thank him for that. However, if he did ask me to, the last thing he would hear from me would be “that’s not my job.” I’d delegate the task to the

appropriate party, and as a supervisor I’d ensure it was done.

As a civilian, I’ve constantly been put in this position since leaving the Corps (God bless it) and I’ve handled the situation accordingly every time. When serving as a manager, I ask my folks to take the same attitude. Don’t get taken advantage of, don’t promise things you can’t deliver, but get the job done, regardless of what the job may be.

In the words of a friend, “the answer is yes ... now what’s the question?” A positive attitude will get you anywhere you want to go. “It’s not my job” will get you somewhere too, but most likely it’ll be the unemployment line.

African-Americans have legacy of military service, sacrifice

News Release
American Forces Press Service

Since the birth of America, African-Americans have fought and died alongside their countrymen as the United States struggled for freedom and peace at home and abroad.

African-American service members have fought in every war the United States has participated in, including the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, World Wars I and II, the Korean War, Vietnam War, Gulf War and the current war on terror.

African-Americans, both free and slaves, participated in all the conflicts in the early days of America. About 5,000 African-American soldiers fought for the U.S. in the American Revolutionary War. African-Americans distinguished themselves in the Boston Massacre in 1770, the Battle of Lexington and Concord in 1775, the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775, and throughout the Revolution.

In the Civil War, 180,000 African-Americans made up 163 units of the Union Army, and many more served in the Union Navy. African-Americans were used mostly for labor by the Confederate forces, although in 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis signed a bill authorizing the enlistment of slaves.

African-American soldiers proved themselves early in the war, such as in 1863, when the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers, commanded by Gen. James G. Blunt, ran into a strong Confederate force in what is now Oklahoma. After a two-hour bloody engagement, the Confederate soldiers retreated. The 1st Kansas, which had held the center of the Union line, advanced to within fifty paces of the Confederate line and exchanged fire for some 20 minutes until the Confederates broke and ran.

After the battle, Blunt wrote, “I never saw such fighting as was done by the negro regiment ... the question that negroes will fight is settled; besides they make better soldiers in every respect than any troops I have ever had under my command.”

Fifteen African-American soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor for their actions in the Civil War, and another seven African-American sailors were honored for their heroism.

In 1866, federal legislation passed that allowed African-Americans to enlist in the regular Army, and by 1869, the Army had four all-African-American units: the 9th and 10th Cavalry and 24th and 25th Infantry regiments. The two infantry regiments were established by consolidating four infantry regiments that had been formed earlier.

It was these African-American units that fought in the Indian Wars of 1867-1891, the

Spanish-American War in 1898, the Philippines Insurrection from 1899 to 1901, and Gen. John Pershing’s punitive expedition into Mexico in 1916. These units were dubbed “Buffalo Soldiers” by the Indians they fought against. It is thought that this nickname was given out of respect for the African-Americans’ fierce fighting ability and naturally curly hair. The term “Buffalo Soldiers” became a generic term for all African-American soldiers for many years.

The first African-American general officer in the U.S. Army was Benjamin O. Davis, of Washington, D.C. Davis entered the military July 13, 1898, during the Spanish-American War, as a temporary first lieutenant of the 8th United States Volunteer Infantry. He was mustered out on March 6, 1899, and on June 18, 1899, he enlisted as a private in Troop 1, 9th Cavalry, of the regular Army. He then served as corporal and squadron sergeant major, and on Feb. 2, 1901, he was commissioned a second lieutenant of cavalry in the regular Army.

Davis reached the rank of brigadier general Oct. 25, 1940. He retired July 31, 1941, and was recalled to active duty with the rank of brigadier general the following day. During his career, Davis served with the 9th and 10th Cavalry; was a professor of military science and tactics at Wilberforce University,

See LEGACY, A-7

Weekend weather outlook

Today	Saturday	Sunday
Day — Partly sunny in the morning then clearing. Isolated showers. Highs around 75. East winds 10 to 15 mph. Chance of rain 20 percent.	Day — Mostly sunny in the morning then becoming partly sunny. Isolated showers. Highs around 75.Chance of rain 20 percent.	Day — Mostly sunny in the morning...then partly sunny with isolated showers in the afternoon. Highs around 76. Chance of rain 20 percent.
Night — Mostly cloudy in the evening then clearing. Isolated showers. Lows 64 to 70. West winds around 10 mph. Chance of rain 20 percent.	Night — Partly cloudy. Isolated showers in the evening. Lows around 66. Light winds. Chance of rain 20 percent.	Night — Mostly cloudy with isolated showers in the evening...then clear after midnight. Lows around 66. Light winds. Chance of rain 20 percent.
High — 75	High — 75	High — 76
Low — 64	Low — 66	Low — 66



Private First Class Jonathon Scott, gunner, Bravo Battery, 1/12, adjusts a howitzer's direction using a digital display.



Marines with Alpha Battery, 1/12, finish preparing an M777A2 Howitzer for transportation during a training exercise Sept. 7, at Landing Zone Eagle. The entire battalion conducted exercises to refresh their memories about the howitzer's capabilities and characteristics.

One big machine

1/12 practices as a whole, prepares for deployment

Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion
Combat Correspondent

The Marines lounge about, waiting for the next simulation to begin. Some at by the transport vehicle while others wait by the M777A2 Howitzer. Suddenly, the chief of section display, the box that receives fire missions from the fire direction center, beeps as another mission comes through and everyone scrambles into action. "Fire mission!" shouts the Marine watching the CSD. "Fire mission!" echo other Marines by the gun. Now the Marines are moving with a purpose. The type of warhead is called out, and two Marines prepare the round with the proper tip. Other Marines adjust the howitzer to the coordinates received from the CSD. A Marine brings the round to the artillery chief, and he double checks to ensure the proper tip is on and secured. Marines load the round. A Marine arms the gun while another one waits for the signal to fire from the artillery chief.

Marines from 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, practiced as a battalion here in anticipation of heading to Pohakuloa Training Area and deploying to Iraq this year. "It feels good to be back doing artillery," said Master Sgt. Bobby J. Warren, operations chief, 1/12. "We haven't been able to do this in about one and a half years, and we're getting back to doing our jobs." During 1/12's last deployment, the batteries in the battalion deployed to different places in Iraq as convoy security and military police in support of the Operation Iraqi Freedom. When they returned, the battalion started learning characteristics and capabilities of the new howitzers. After learning about the new gun and having individual batteries practice with them, the time came for the units to come together and learn to be a battalion. "The training is going well," Warren said. "It's all coming back to [the Marines] rather quickly. It's just the fact they haven't done it in a while and are trying to work the kinks out. Kind of like if you haven't

ridden a bike in a while, and you try to ride one. It would take a little bit of time for you to find your balance, but soon, you would ride with no problem." The Marines operating the guns practiced for weeks on end to learn, operate and maintain them. "These guys work very hard in their job," said 1st Lt. Aaron Clevinger, Guns Platoon commander, Alpha Battery, 1/12. "They are getting what is called a 'fire hose' effect where they are getting a lot of information, and they have to retain that information, along with hands-on training of the howitzers and performing maintenance on them. They are doing very well so far." In order to properly evaluate themselves, the entire battalion practiced simulations. A forward observer calls in another fire mission to the battalion fire direction center. The FDC plots the target, making sure no friendlies are in the impact zone and decides which battery can get the best fire for effect, whether to neutralize, suppress or destroy the target. The battalion FDC processes and sends the mission to a battery FDC, who gets into the technical aspect of the mission. They take the actual data



Lance Cpl. Matthew Boggs, S-3 clerk, 1/12, writes down fire mission information during a training exercise here Feb. 7.

required to place the round on target and send it to the howitzers. "The entire process is designed for accurate first round fire for effect," Clevinger said. "The process also includes safety procedures on our end. We double or triple check everything before firing the howitzer. Anything from the type of warhead, the temperature of the powder, the fuses and the adjustments on the gun to the weather is checked multiple times. Everything we do is to ensure our rounds stay ahead of the grunt units and provide them with fire support." As 1/12 prepares for predeployment, the training they receive will prepare them as separate entities working as a single battalion. "It's a painful process of learning and relearning the job they are trained for," said Navy Lt. Gary Lock, Navy liaison officer, Headquarters Battery, 1/12. "They have to learn to work as a battalion again, and it looks like they are doing well."



Corporal Thomas Rosinski, artillery chief, Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment, calls out data to his Marines from the chief of section display during a training exercise Feb. 7 at Landing Zone Eagle.

Photos by Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion

Voter training ensures no ballot left behind

Christine Cabalo
Photojournalist

Ready to the rock the vote, 29 service members here earned their certification as voting assistance officers Thursday.

The new officers will help other service members and their families apply to vote in their home state by absentee ballot. Training covered voting requirements and how to get in touch with different state election offices.

“About 80 percent of Marines voted in the 2004 election,” said Meghan Gordon, strategic communications planning specialist, Federal Voting Assistance Program. “It’s a good increase from voter turnout the election before. In 2000, we had about 62 percent of Marines vote.”

Personnel from Kaneohe Bay and Camp H.M. Smith took the four-hour workshop, and the training is also available online.

“In order to hold the UVAO billet — each individual must be trained,” said Capt. Tracy Maese, adjutant and installation voting assistance officer, Marine Corps Base Hawaii. “The training can take place in a classroom setting given by the Federal Voting Assistance Program and Headquarters Marine Corps trainers or by the installation voting assistance officer.”

Gordon showed trainees that service members must apply for absentee ballots each time they move. This confirms to election officials the right person is voting, and the correct voting material reaches



Captain Tracy Maese, adjutant and installation voting assistance officer, searches through a voting guide during a Feb. 7 voting assistant training session. Maese and Chief Warrant Officer Vernadel Green, aircraft maintenance engineer officer, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 24, studied new regulations on sending in absentee ballots.

the proper address. Voting assistance officers can also ask for help from the Judge Advocate General’s Office.

The extensive tutoring for each unit’s officers helps cut down on the number of uncountable ballots, Gordon said. In 2004, state election officials deemed 6 percent of overseas absentee ballots as uncountable. The amount dropped from the previous election year when the rate was 12 percent. Ballots are

declined due to illegible handwriting or election officials unable to find a voter’s correct mailing address.

“As it is an election year, the information covered in this training session was very vital to better assist the service members and their dependants in registering to vote and applying for absentee ballots,” Maese said. “After completing the training, the voting assistance officers are now equipped with the proper

knowledge to ensure that all service members receive the opportunity to vote.”

During the training, Gordon helped service members determine where voters could cast their ballots if they’ve moved several times. She said voting residency is based on whether service members are present in the state they wish to vote in, have an address in that state, and if the voter intends to return in the future.

FVAP officials also let the officers know voters should fill out as much contact information as possible and to avoid using confusing e-mail addresses. Gordon said multiple ways of contacting voters is important for state election officials. Each state has different voting guidelines, and some don’t allow ballots sent by e-mail. Other states allow ballots to be faxed in by voters. Each state’s regulations are online and in a voting guide

directory that all VA officers have.

“We do want to ensure everyone who wants to vote can,” Gordon said. “We want every vote to be a successfully completed one so no votes go uncounted.”

For more information about registering to vote in Hawaii, log on to <http://www.hawaii.gov/elections>. Additional absentee ballot voting information is available at <http://www.fvap.gov/>.

‘Warrior Fellowship Breakfast’ unites Marines, Sailors

Christine Cabalo
Photojournalist

Dozens of service members filled up on pancakes and camaraderie during a Feb. 6 “Warrior Fellowship Breakfast” sponsored by Combat Service Support Group 3.

The sunrise meal at Anderson Hall brought together CSSG-3’s Marines and Sailors to swap stories while building team spirit. Every quarter, the service members congregate to remember the fallen.

“It’s the first thing we do in the morning,” said Sgt. Maj. Dan Duvall, unit sergeant major, CSSG-3. “So, it sets the stage for the rest of the day.”

Running out of room at tables, some stood along the walls to wait for unit speakers. Warriors leaders began the breakfast with a welcoming blessing, and Lance Cpl. Michael Ashby, welder, CSSG-3, played soothing mandolin music during the meal.

“We’ve had remarkable participation,” Duvall said. “People are given a choice, and no one is forced to come. It says a lot that whenever we have a breakfast, the smallest showing of people we’ve ever had is 75 percent.”

The breakfast is the third CSSG-3 warriors shared together since beginning the tradition in June 2007. He said as a morning meal, it remains

popular because people are mentally and physically stimulated. The sergeant major said breakfast is a good time for service members to reflect spiritually about working together.

“There’s a great value to the breakfast because it instills camaraderie,” he said. “We’re able to acknowledge the diverse array of faith groups we have.”

Speaking at the morning meeting, 1st Sgt. Vincent Santiago, Headquarters Company first sergeant, CSSG-3, said he’s enjoyed seeing how the meal brings everyone together. He said he makes it a point to meet newly assigned service members during each breakfast. With so many parts in the unit, Santiago said the breakfast is essential for keeping up every Warrior’s good morale.

“Between individual augmentees going out and others on [temporary assigned duty], it may be months in between times companies see each other,” Santiago said. “The breakfast is a time for people to check in with each other. You can sit across from someone and just get to know them better.”

Santiago, previously assigned to 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, said the sunrise meal is a good use of time in a calm environment. Both he and the sergeant major said the event improves worker efficiency and builds stronger bonds between



First Sgt. Vincent Santiago, Headquarters Company first sergeant, Combat Service Support Group 3, speaks to dozens of service members during the Feb. 6 Warriors Fellowship Breakfast. Santiago spoke about taking the time to honor fallen warriors by setting an example to others and leading an honorable life.

CSSG-3’s service members.

“It’s increased the unit’s pride so much,” Duvall said. “It’s changed how we take care of each other, and this program is just one of many that propels our progress.”

During his address to the crowd, Santiago said he uses the quiet times of eating together to remember

those who sacrificed themselves. As their first sergeant, he told the attending Marines and Sailors they should honor the fallen by leading admirable lives. Duvall said it’s a way for the CSSG-3 team members to honor those who couldn’t break bread with them. The warm meal serves as a time to take pride in the

talents of the service members who work under his command, Santiago said.

“It’s nice to have some time to take in the freedom you have,” he said. “After eating breakfast, you walk away with a better appreciation for everyone you work with.”

National Treasures



Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantariotis

‘These are national treasures,’ Col. Mark A. Dungan, commanding officer, Marine Corps Base Hawaii, said during The Aloha Chapter of The Chosin Few’s painting presentation to Anderson Hall Feb. 7. ‘These [veterans] are not forgotten,’ he said. ‘And we should never forget ... these guys can tell you exactly how it is, they wrote the footnotes.’ The veterans hoped the painting would remind current Marines of their history and encourage them to remain proud of the service they chose because it neared extinction at one point. The painting of the Chosin Reservoir, presented to Dungan by Robert Talmadge, the president of the Aloha Chapter of the Chosen Few, is a replication of the one displayed at the Officers’ Club.



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Big money



Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion

The Marine Corps Base Hawaii Boys and Girls Club-Manana received a grant of \$3,900 from JCPenny for their after school programs. JCPenny custom decorating associates presented the check to the Manana Teen Center Monday at Building 852 in Manana Housing. The center received the money for supplies, program coordinations, computer upgrades, their photography program and bus costs for field trips. Members also had their membership costs waived for the next year and received a \$50 gift certificate from JCPennys to use online. Although the children received the gift certificates, some donated theirs to help families in the community. Through the efforts of the children and donations from the local community, two families received nearly \$1,500 each. First row left to right: Kristie Matsuoka, Song Stone, Marilyn Siquig, Julie Jackson and Marlene Ramos. Second Row left to right: Kawiki Louis, Basil Clement, Andrew Cullimore and Justin Getz. Third row: Farn Wang, grey shirt, and Jeff Allender. Fourth row: Bryan Avalos.

Mokapu Elementary students support deployed parents

Lance Cpl. Alesha R. Guard
Combat Correspondent

Students shrieked with excitement and surprise as they stuck their hands in the cold, wet paper plates. Paint drizzled down their wrists as they waited for their turn to slap a brightly colored hand-print on a big cloth poster reading “Welcome Home!”

Second and fourth grade classes at Mokapu Elementary School made welcome home posters for returning parents Friday, just one of many ways the school shows support for deployed parents.

“I thought it was important that the kids show support to their parents,” said Julie Soares, teacher, Mokapu Elementary School. “They

need to feel involved in their parents’ deployment in a positive way, and its up to us to help them. We have to work together as a community to help the children during deployment.”

This past year, more parents than usual were deploying, and it really hit home at the elementary school, Soares said. The school prepared for the increase in deployed parents by having doctors come and speak with the teachers about how deployments could affect children.

“I’ve learned it’s important to be understanding with the children and talk to them about their parents’ deployment,” said Lovella Corrales-Dagdag, Mokapu teacher. “Deployment affects the children’s

personal life and school life.”

The students have really enjoyed getting involved in the many projects the different classes have undertaken to support the deployed parents, Soares said.

“Little things like sending cards overseas or helping paint a welcome home poster for a returning parent’s homecoming means a lot to the children,” Corrales-Dagdag said. “Our class made self-portrait puzzles to send with packages to deployed parents, and the children had so much fun making them.”

Parents from Mokapu helped with care packages by donating various items, Soares said.

Some classes are sending packages regularly and receive many thanks from service members for their efforts.

“I’d like to thank you for the package your students put together for our Sailors currently deployed,” wrote Command Master Chief Bill Singer, command master chief, Patrol Squadron 47. “The poems and writings of your students, plus the items you sent raised the morale of our Sailors and really brightened our spirits . . . we greatly appreciate their efforts.”

Not only are the students supporting their parents overseas, they’re also encouraging each other as classmates. Students with deployed parents can participate in group classes once a week during school to share feelings.

“The idea is having kids know they aren’t alone,” said Barbara

Uno, Mokapu school counselor. “The program is about them, being able to talk about their situations and improve their self esteem. The kids really seem to enjoy the program.”

The program reinforces positive attitudes, Uno said. In the group, students make a book especially for the parent who is away. Through this project, she hopes children feel more freely about expressing their feelings and benefit from a support group of their peers.

“Its important for parents and the community to be involved as much as we can with the children not only with their school work but also with their personal well-being,” Corrales-Dagdag said.



Students at Mokapu Elementary School dip their hands in paint and stamp their prints on a welcome home poster Friday.



Second graders at Mokapu Elementary School leave their handprints on a welcome home poster for returning deployed parents.

Navy squadron puts superhornets to test

Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion
Combat Correspondent

A Navy Squadron continues to test systems in the cockpits of the new FA-18E (single seat) and FA-18F (double seat) Superhornets here and around Oahu.

Fixed Wing Test Squadron 9 flew to Hawaii to get test results they wouldn't get anywhere else.

"We are fully able to test the new systems out here," said Ron Brigham, flight test engineer, U.S. Navy. "We have unencumbered spaces to use, unlike the continental U.S. Hawaii gives us the room we need and the ranges to perform these tests."

The squadron tested numerous systems inside and outside the aircraft, along with the abilities of its pilots.

"The pilots of the aircraft have to know and understand all the tactics for air-to-air and air-to-ground combat with the Superhornets," said Navy Lt. Mark Huber, unit information officer, VX-9. "They also have to understand all the weapons and systems the Hornets use. The aircraft is a capable and versatile platform using both air-to-air, and air-to-ground techniques and still has the ability to land on a carrier."

Although the squadron hopes to complete their testing soon,



Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion

The FA-18E Superhornet is one of the newest models of the aircraft to enter service. The aircraft can carry up to five fuel tanks or various weapon systems.

they're leaving the departure date open.

"This is basically the last stop for the new systems until the Hornets out in the fleet receive them," Huber said. "Practicing here with the 199th Fighter Squadron out of Hickam, using the over-water ranges and the weather here made this place perfect to test and evaluate the systems properly."

The testing has been going well, but as with most tests, they're

designed to evaluate problems.

"The pilots have been doing an outstanding job so far testing the systems," Brigham said. "There are a few problems, but that's why we're here. We iron out what went wrong and send it back to Boeing for fixing."

In addition to the systems in the cockpits, the pilots are testing new jamming equipment and the APG-79 radar, one of the most advanced radar systems in

the world, Huber said.

"It is becoming a technology-based aircraft," Huber said. "Anytime you get newer software, it has to be compatible with the rest of the systems in the aircraft, and as we get more software, it frees the pilot to do other functions, making it easier on them."

The pilots flew their aircraft day after day, testing the systems for anything wrong in as ideal conditions as possible.

"We have to set up as realistic situations as possible to test these systems," Huber said. "If they don't pass, we send them back."

The squadron is stationed out of Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, Calif., and has tested Hornets for about 10 years. Other aircraft in the squadron include the FA-18 Hornet, the F-14 Tomcat, the EA-6B Prowler, the AV-8B Harrier and the AH-1 Cobra.



File photo

Marine Corps Off-Duty Deaths

The Base Safety Center provides training to all service members to reduce the risks for danger. There are currently no reported fatalities in Hawaii this year, and more than 80 percent of Marines lost last year died in private motor vehicle accidents and off-duty recreation. The most deaths occurred due to 4-wheel vehicle incidents, according to a Feb. 8 report from the Naval Safety Center.

There are currently no reported fatalities in Hawaii this year. More than 80 percent of Marines lost from October 2007 to present died in private.

SAFETY, from A-1

Lifeguards will explain about conditions and answer questions anyone has about the water."

Leonard said talking with lifeguards and looking out for warning signs is important before getting in the water. The safety organization also posts a red warning flag to let people know at a glance it's unsafe to enter the water. The assistant manager said red flags don't always mean a beach is completely closed. In larger areas, like Pyramid Rock, people may still enjoy the sand but not the water during a red flag day. He said awareness is very important because anything in an uncontrolled environment could be dangerous.

"Our saying is 'If in doubt, don't go out,'" Leonard said. "If you're not sure you can handle it, then don't go in the water. The wave height or current strength could take anyone by surprise."

Sode said Hawaii's low fatality rates in the water and on the road is a team effort with every service member who stays safe. The deputy director said there are dangers to any activity, and taking unnecessary risks threatens other people's safety.

"Risk assessment and making a good choice is up to the individual," he said. "Doing things the right way the first time prevents problems from happening."

BRONZE, from A-1

but don't have anyone to say it to."

Many of the Marines appreciated his efforts and the time he took to visit and speak with them.

"Sergeant major has always been a great leader," said Gunnery Sgt. Milo Ramirez, battalion logistics, 1/12. "Taking care of his Marines is his top priority, and it shows by his leadership."

Bell had roughly 15 convoys and 81 helicopter transports during the deployment, checking morale, ensuring his Marines understood the mission and were doing what needed to be done, he said.

"I think a big part of leadership is showing the Marines someone cares," Bell said.

The award ceremony was filled with 1/12's senior enlisted and officers, which Bell credited during the ceremony for the excellent job they did and how important a role they played in the success of the deployment.

"I'm stunned that I got this award," Bell said during the ceremony. "But I'll let you know, first sergeant, master sergeant – it's all you. I've gotten a lot of awards, but every time was because I was fortunate enough to have a great team. Everyone stepped up and did a lot."

Bell also took a moment to thank someone very close to him who wasn't present.

"My wife's not here," he said. "But I'd like to thank her for being so understanding and letting me do 'Marine things.' She lets me do my job; she's always been there for me."

The officers and senior enlisted were very proud to see Bell recognized for his difficult job well done.

"Whenever a Marine gets an award, it's a special event," said Maj. Omar Sanchez, executive officer, 1/12. "Because it not only recognizes the Marine, but the unit. There's a sense of pride to see the top enlisted Marine getting recognized. He deserves it; he takes any opportunity to take care of his Marines."



LEGACY, from A-2

Ohio, and Tuskegee, Ala.; served as a brigade commander in 2nd Cavalry Division; and served as an assistant to the inspector general in Washington, D.C.

Davis’ son, retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., was the fourth African-American graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and the nation's second African-American general officer.

Although the U.S. armed forces remained segregated throughout World War I, many African-Americans volunteered and fought with U.S. forces. By the end of the war, more than 350,000 African-Americans had served in the conflict, 1,400 of whom were commissioned officers.

Many African-American units were relegated to support roles during World War I, but several units did distinguish themselves in combat. One of the most famous units was the 369th Infantry Regiment, known as the "Harlem Hellfighters," which was on the front lines for six months. One hundred seventy-one members of the 396th were awarded the Legion of Merit medal. Cpl. Freddie Stowers, of 371st Infantry Regiment, was posthumously awarded a Medal of Honor in 1991, making him the only African-American to be so honored for actions in World War I. Stowers led an assault on German trenches in France and continued to lead his men even after being wounded twice.

In World War II, more than 2.5 million African-Americans registered for service, but only 1 million actually served. African-American servicemembers served in Casablanca, Italy, the Aleutians, Northern Ireland, Liberia, New Guinea, the China-Burma-India theater, Guam, Iwo Jima, Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Saipan, Okinawa, Peleliu, Australia, France, and England.

It was during World War II that the famed Tuskegee Airmen served. Actually the 332nd Fighter Group of the U.S. Army Air Corps, the Tuskegee Airmen were the first African-American military pilots. The 332nd’s most notable mission was escorting bombing raids into Austria, Hungary, Poland and Germany.

The pilots flew more than 15,000 sorties and were awarded several Silver Stars, 150 Distinguished Flying Crosses, eight Purple Hearts, 14 Bronze Stars, and 744 Air Medals.

In 1948, President Harry S. Truman signed Executive Order 9981, integrating the armed forces and eliminating racial discrimination in federal employment. Segregation in the military officially ended in 1954, when the last all-African-American unit was abolished.

The Korean War and Vietnam War both saw many great accomplishments by African-American servicemembers. In the Korean War, Jesse L. Brown, the first African-American U.S. Navy aviator, was killed when his plane was shot down during the Battle of Chosin Reservoir. The Navy honored Brown by naming an escort ship after him -- the USS Jesse L. Brown.

During the Vietnam War, African-Americans continued to join the military in large numbers. Overall, 20 African-Americans were awarded the Medal of Honor for their actions in that conflict, including the first living African-American to receive the Medal of Honor since the Mexican-American War, the first African-American Marine to receive the medal, and the first African-American commissioned officer to receive the medal.

African-American enlistment into the U.S. military jumped with the advent of the all-volunteer force in 1973. African-Americans made up about 17 percent of the military’s enlisted force when the draft ended in 1973. By the early 1980s, African-Americans made up nearly 24 percent of the enlisted force. When the United States and its allies pushed Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein’s forces out of Kuwait in 1991, the most senior officer in the U.S. military was an African-American, Army Gen. Colin L. Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Powell later served as secretary of state in President George W. Bush’s administration.

Today, African-Americans continue to serve the nation as members of the military during the war on terror. February is African-American History Month, which celebrates the contributions African-Americans have made in the U.S. over the years.

Al Qaeda fighters flee cities

Fred W. Baker III
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — A surge in military operations and a shift in local support in northern Iraq has driven many al Qaeda fighters out of cities that once provided them safe haven and into the desert, or even out of the country, a commander in the region said Monday.

Citizens in the four-province region of Multi-National Division - North have begun shifting their support to Coalition and Iraqi forces in “droves,” and security gains are increasingly putting extremists on the run with no clear place to go to be safe, said Army Maj. Gen. Mark P. Hertling, commander of Multi-National Division - North and the U.S. Army’s 1st Armored Division. The northern division is about the size of Pennsylvania and includes Diyala, Salahuddin, Ninevah and Tamim provinces.

Some foreign fighters are returning to their home countries of Syria and Saudi Arabia, he said, taking with them funds earmarked for fighters in Iraq. Some are trying to reorganize outside the country’s borders, but Hertling’s troops are watching the border and have arrested

some as they try to return, he said. Others, who no longer feel safe in the cities because they are afraid that local citizens will turn them in, are hiding out in abandoned mud huts, canals or caves in the desert.

“That’s their biggest fear. So many of them are going to the desert regions to just get away from being ratted out by the citizens by being pointed out and captured,” Hertling said.

But, even their desert hideaways are targets under six-week-long Operation Iron Harvest, part of the countrywide Operation Phantom Phoenix.

“Some of them are saying it’s not even safe in the desert because the night raids are coming to get them,” Hertling said. “And that’s a good thing. We want them to keep thinking that they can’t sleep well at night because we’re coming after them, because, quite frankly, we are.”

Hertling could not give specific numbers on how many fighters have left or an estimate of the size of the enemy force remains in the region, but he said fewer al Qaeda fighters are in the province now than six weeks ago.

“We’re doing exactly what we’re trying to do, and that is

make the cities safer for the Iraqi citizens while continuing to target al Qaeda and the other extremist groups,” the commander said.

Diyala province, specifically, is much safer today than it was a month ago, Hertling said. Citizens are less afraid to go out on the streets, and markets are opening, he said.

Hurtling attributed the gains in the province to the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces, the installation of local bases in the province, and improving local and national governments.

In Iron Harvest operations over the past 45 days, Coalition and Iraqi security forces there have conducted 74 missions. They have captured or killed more than 70 high-value individuals, and “hundreds” of enemy fighters, the general said. They found more than 430 caches with tons of explosives and weapons, he added, and they have cleared 653 home-made bombs, 42 house bombs, 35 car bombs and three bomb factories.

Attacks have leveled off in the region since December, following a drastic drop. Attacks range from about 20 to 50 daily, Hertling said.

SAILOR, from A-1

“I was always raised with a hard work ethic,” Vandervis said. “My grandpa was a drill instructor in the Marine Corps; it’s in me to do my best in everything I do, and that’s easy when you believe in what you do.”

As an aerospace medical technician corpsmen, Vandervis’ role is to provide medical support to flight crews.

Vandervis is modest about winning the back-to-back awards. He insists he genuinely loves his work and what he tries to accomplish, leading him to be a two-time recipient in a field of more than 500 service members.

“My goal is to do everything I could for the service,” he said. “Working with Marines excites me every day; there’s a lot of history and it means a lot to me. Having the opportunity to serve your country, especially when there’s a lot of people who can’t, is amazing.”

The kind of person it takes to win this award is someone who has the real desire to help others, and someone who can adapt, said Chief Petty Officer Gregory Fall, senior enlisted leader, MAG-24 Medical.

“Corpsmen by nature are compassionate people,” Fall said. “They help people in need; Vandervis really thrives on that. There was never a task he wasn’t excited about and ready to

do with everything he had.”

An example of his drive is when he partook in corporals course during his deployment to Iraq.

“I had the opportunity to take the course in Iraq and there was no way I wasn’t going to take it,” Vandervis said. “I just wanted to learn as much as possible and enjoy the opportunity of a lifetime.”

Vandervis’s inability to settle or only do what is required instead of going above and beyond is how he distinguished himself throughout the Navy to win the AVT of the year award twice. Vandervis didn’t consider the award while performing his duties ... that’s just the kind of Sailor he is.



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AROUND THE CORPS

Last living Marine at first Iwo flag raising dies

Public Affairs Office
MCB Quantico

REDDING, Calif. — Raymond Jacobs, believed to be the last surviving member of the group of Marines photographed during the original U.S. flag-raising on Iwo Jima during World War II, has died at age 82.

Jacobs died Jan. 29 of natural causes at a Redding hospital, his daughter, Nancy Jacobs, told The Associated Press.

Jacobs had spent his later years working to prove that he was the radio operator photographed looking up at an American flag as it was being raised by other Marines on Mount Suribachi Feb. 23, 1945, on the island about 745 miles south of Tokyo.

Newspaper accounts from the time show he was on the mountain during the initial raising of a smaller American flag, though he had returned to his unit by the time the more famous AP photograph was taken of a second flag-raising later the same day.

The radioman's face isn't fully visible in the first photograph taken of the first flag-raising by Lou Lowery, a photographer for Leatherneck Magazine, leading some veterans to question Jacobs' claim. However, other negatives from the same roll of film show the radioman is Jacobs, said retired Col. Walt Ford, editor of Leatherneck.

"It's clearly a front-on face shot of Ray Jacobs," Ford said.

Annette Amerman, a historian with the Marine Corps History Division, said in an e-mailed statement "there are

many that believe" Jacobs was the radioman. "However, there are no official records produced at the time that can prove or refute Mr. Jacobs' location."

Jacobs was honorably discharged in 1946. He was called up during the Korean War in 1951 before retiring as a sergeant, his daughter said.

Jacobs retired in 1992 from KTVU-TV in Oakland, where he worked 34 years as a reporter, anchor and news director.



A small flag carried by the Echo Company (mixed), 2nd Battalion, 28th Regiment, 5th Marine Division is planted atop Mount Suribachi at 10:20 a.m. Feb 23, 1945 (left photo). The 54-by-28 inch American flag was from their transport ship, the USS Missoula. This is the first flag-raising on the top of Mt. Suribachi. The more famous Rosenthal flag-raising photo was taken when a second, larger flag was raised several hours later that day. Shown in a second photo (right), taken several minutes after the first - (A) Cpl. Charles Lindberg – WIA 1 Mar (B) Sgt. Howard Snyder (C) Petty Officer 2nd Class John Bradley - WIA (D) Pvt. Phil Ward (E) Sgt. Ernest Thomas - KIA March 3, 1945 (F) Sgt. Henry Hansen - KIA March 1, 1945 - died in John Bradley's arms. (G) Pfc. Raymond Jacobs - Fox Company, 2/28 (H) (out of frame, right) 1st Lt. Harold Shrier - Echo Company CO, XO 2/28 - KIA later the day these photos were taken.

COMING
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TOWEL"

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